FOR MYSORE STATE

Secrl. II-27—100,000—21-5-52.

(1)

Home (1952) Department.

SERIES.

G.O. No. 3690

Dated 5-10-1952

[Despatch Abstract.]

MOTOR VEHICLES - Taxis - Plying without meters - Prevention - Papers Recorded.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Abstract.

MOTOR VEHICLES - Taxis - Plying without meters - Prevention - Papers - Recorded.

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Home Department.

Motor Vehicles - Plying without Taxi meters - Collection of excess fares.

From Sri K.A.Nachiappa Gounder M.L.A. letter dated 15th May 1948.

Extract of H.M.(P.W.)'s minute on page 1 c.f. *Secy Home.

The P.M.T.C may be asked to examine this for necessary action and forward his remarks.

In the city too the C.I.D may be asked to look into this.

M.B.10-6-48.

From the I.G. of Police No.1159-C/Stat-1/48 dated 16-7-1948.
From the C.R.T.Bd.No.14212/A.3/48 dated 5-8-1948

Sri Nachiappa Gounder M.L.A. has stated that when he visited Madura recently he found the taxis there plying without taxi-meters with the result that travellers were obliged to bargain with the taxi-drivers who invariably demanded exorbitant rates. He himself had to pay Rs.4/- for taking him from Madura Junction to the American College Compound a distance of only 2 miles.

He has also stated that even in Madras city where taxis are fitted with taxi meters and a notice is prominently displayed in each taxi showing the prescribed rates, the taxi drivers attempt to dodge and collect higher rates. He therefore requests that immediate action may be taken to see that all taxis plying in Madura as well as in other districts are fitted with taxi meters and are properly controlled against collecting fares in excess. He has also requested for a reply in the matter.

The C.R.T.Bd whose remarks were called for regarding all taxis being fitted with taxi meters, has stated that such a step is desirable but that the difficulty is the non-availability of taxi meters. The Central Board also states that taxi owners are willing to have meters fitted up provided they are available for purchasing.

As regards the collection of excess fares in the Madras City the Inspector General of Police was asked to have the matter investigated by the C.I.D and report to the Government. The I.G. of Police has sent a copy of the Memorandum from the D.I.G of Police, Rlys and C.I.D Madras on this subject. The report shows that the taxi drivers do charge rates higher than those prescribed, particularly for journeys involving short distances. Touts are often engaged in the Central and Egmore Railway stations who make it difficult to secure a taxi unless it be through their agency The travelling public though aware of such difficulties, have neither the time nor the patience to bring these to the notice of the concerned authorities. The D.I.G of Police considers that the recent cut in the quota of petrol which has in its wake, created a black market in petrol, may be one of the factors that has caused this state of affairs.

The Inspector General of Police has stated that he is instructing the Commissioner of Police to see that rules 228 and 230 of M.M.V. Rules are properly enforced and to lay traps to detect cases of excess collection of fares. The Inspector General of Police feels that by these measures, the malpractices referred to in the report of the Deputy Inspector of General of Police, Rlys and C.I.D. can be put down to a great extent.

Rule 228 of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules lays down the regulations to be observed by motor car drivers at motor cab stands. Rule 230 prohibits the employment of touts/of canvass passengers. As the Inspector General of Police is taking action for the strict enforcement of these rules and for detecting cases of excess collection of fares, no further action seems necessary in the matter.

With regard to fitting up of taxi-meters, rule 410 of M.M.V Rules lays down that every motor cab, except when exempted in

To ascertain whether the Central Road Traffic Board's statement that meters were not available any where in India was correct, the Commissioner of Police was addresed, in view of the fact that in Madras City all taxis are fitted with meters and there has been a steady increase in the number of taxis inthe city but never the less the owners have been able to procure taxi meters.

The Commissioner of Police has replied that taxi meters are not available in Madras but that a few are said to be available in Bombay which are sold at a cost varying from Rs.1200/- to Rs.1900 each as against the original cost of Rs.450/-.

Rule 401 of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules lays down that every motor cab, except when exempted in this regard by the Reginal Transport Authority shall be fitted with a taxi meter bearing the seal of the Regional Transport Authority. The rule also prohibits tampering with either the meter or the seal. Rules 402 to 407 provide for the inspection of the taxi meter and regulate the operation of the meter.

Apparently the provisions of rule 401 are not enforced in respect of taxis plying in the mufassal and the Regional Transport Authorities exempt them on the ground that taxi meters are not available. If, however, the discretionary powers, now vested in the Regional Transport Authorities to exempt the taxis are removed and if all taxis are compelled to ply with meters fitted up, it will create a demand for taxi meters and the concerned dealers will be in a position to import more and make them available in large numbers and the present dearth of taxi meters may disappear. It may also be pointed out that inspite of the sacaricty of taxi meters, additional taxis which are introduced in Madras City get duly fitted with meters. The number of taxis in Madras City as on 31-3-47 was 202 and the number at present is 250. The total number of taxis in all the districts in the mufassal as on 31-3-47 was only 320.

It is therefore for orders whether rule 401 (a) of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules may be amended to make it obligatory that all taxis should be fitted with meters. In order that no undue hardship is imposed on the taxi owners, the Central Road Traff/Board

may be asked to bring to the notice of all the Regional Transport Authorities the proposed amendment, so that they may instruct the taxi owners in their jurisidictions to see that their taxis are fitted with meters by the time the amendment takes effect. The M.L.A. may be informed that action is being taken to prevent taxis plying without taxi meters and to prevent excess collection of fares.

I doubt if we can or should enforce this order at present in respect of moffusil taxis, as prices of metres seem to be excessive. For the present we may be content with the police 'traps' to check illicit practices and take up the question of compulsion when the position relating to meters becomes easier. The M.L.A of course can be suitably informed on the above lines.

With reference to the orders above, two drafts are submitted for approval. After issue, the papers may be recorded with a Call Book entry against 1-10-1949.

What is the point of the Memorandum to the Inspector General of Police? If there are no meters in the taxis in the mufassal how can 'traps' be laid?

Ref:- Assistant Secretary's query above.

Submitted. Although taxis in the mufassal are not fitted with meters, the maximum and minimum fares chargeable by taxi drivers in Madras City and in the muffassal have been fixed. The rates of fares which are in force from 1-5-48 are shown on page 2 C.F. of M.F. Taxi drivers in the muffassal should not charge in excess of the prescribed rates. If they do so, disciplinary action can be taken against them. It is to detect such cases of excess collection of fares that the Inspector General of Police is being asked to instruct the District Superintendents of Police to lay traps.

in this regard by the Regional Transport Authority shall be fitted with a taxi meter bearing the seal of the Regional Transport Authority. The rule also prohibits tampering with either the meter or the seal. Rules 402 to 407 provide for the inspection of the taxi meter and regulate the operation of the meter.

At present, the provisions of rule 401 of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules are not enforced in respect of taxis plying in the mufassal. The reason given by the Central Road Traffic Board is that taxi meters are not available any where in India at present. This does not appear to be quite correct. In Madras city all taxis are fitted with meters There has been a steady increase in the number of taxis in the city but never the less the owners have been able to procure the meters which shows that taxi meters are available if the owner take pains to get them.

Apparently, the Regional Transport Authorities in the mufassal exempt the taxis from the provisions of rule 401 of M.M.V. Rules merely on the plea that meters are not available. If the discretionary powers, now vested in the Regional Transport Authorities of exempting the taxis, are removed, and if all taxis are compelled to ply with meters fitted up, it will create a demand for taxi meters and the concerned dealers will be in a position to import more and make them available in large numbers.

It is for orders therefore whether rule 401 (a) of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules may be amended to make it obligatory that all taxis should be fitted with meters. In order that no undue hardship is imposed on the taxi owners, the Central Road Traffic Board may be asked to bring to the notice of all the Regional Transport Authorities of the proposed amendment so that they may instruct the taxi owners in their jurisdictions to see that their taxis are fitted with meters by the time amendment takes effect.

The M.L.A may be informed that suitable action is being taken to prevent taxis plying without being fitted with

meters and to prevent excess collection of fares.

Ascertain from the Commissioner of Police whether the statement of the Central Road Traffic Board that meters are not available any where in India at present is correct.

A draft Memorandum is submitted for approval.

From the Commissioner of Police, No.1772/Lorry/48 dated 9-9-1948.

In May 1948, Sri Nachiappa Gounder, M.L.A. complained about taxis plying without taxi meters which resulted in travellers being obliged to bargain with the taxi drivers who invariably demanded exorbitant rates. He himself had to pay Rs.4/- for taking him from Madura Junction to the American College compound, a distance of only two miles He also stated that even in Madras City, wher taxis were fitted with taxi meters, taxi drivers attempted to dodge and collect excess fares. He therefore requested that immediate action might be taken to see that all taxis plying in the mufassal were fitted with taxi meters.

The Central Road Traffic Board whose remarks were called for, regarding all taxis being fitted with meters, stated that although such a step was desirable the difficulty was the non-availability of taxi-meters.

As regards the collection of excess fares in the Madras City, the Inspector General of Police was asked to have the matter investigated by the C.I.D. and report to the Government. The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Railways and C.I.D. who investigated the matter reported that excess collection of fares by taxi drivers in the city was a fact. The Inspector General of Police stated that, to put an end to this, he was instructing the Commissioner of Police to see that rules 228 and 230 of Madras Motor Vehicles Rules were properly enforced and to lay traps to detect cases of excess collection of fares.